CARLTON

ROYAL DUBLIN SOCIETY, &c.

RETURN to an Order of the Honourable The House of Commons, dated 21 April 1864;—*for*,

COPY "of INSTRUCTIONS to the COMMISSION appointed to inquire into the ROYAL DUBLIN SOCIETY, the MUSEUM of IRISH INDUSTRY, and the System of SCIENTIFIC INSTRUCTION in *Ireland*."

The Treasury, Whitehall, 10 May 1864. } F. PEEL.

COPY of TREASURY MINUTE dated May 1862.

WRITE to the Vice-President of the Committee of Council on Education, that my Lords have had under consideration the several questions relating to the Royal Dublin Society which have been brought by the Science and Art Department to the notice of this Board. As regards the provision made in the Estimates for the repair and alteration of the buildings of the Institution, my Lords, concurring in opinion with the Lords of the Committee, have caused the items which have been proposed for their approval in the Draft Estimate of Public Buildings in Ireland to be transferred to the Estimate for the Science and Art Department, under the proper head; and their Lordships will intimate to the Commissioners of Public Works in Ireland, that the works thus provided for, while they remain under the immediate direction of the Board of Works, are to be regarded as executed for the Department of Science and Art, with which department it will be proper that the Commissioners should hold such communication, as is usual with other departments, under like circumstances. My Lords are not prepared to assent to the proposal, that a grant should be made by Her Majesty's Government equal to the capital value of the charge of 100*l.* a-year for rent, which is payable by the Dublin National Gallery, in consideration of the Society undertaking to pay that rent for the future; for while on the one hand their Lordships do not admit the responsibility of providing this rent out of public funds, they observe that the revenues of the Society would be quite unequal even to its present expenditure, without the aid of the Parliamentary vote, the continuance of which for an indefinite time is therefore assumed in all arrangements which would add to existing charges; but this assistance from Parliament is not of a permanent character, but on the contrary is granted only from year to year, and cannot, therefore, be regarded in the light of a regular source of income.

The considerable expenditure which would be incurred in carrying out the improvements suggested by Captain Donnelly's inquiry, however judicious, is one which my Lords consider should be primarily provided for from local or private contributions; the aid of Parliament being resorted to only for the completion of the funds required upon the testimony which such contributions alone can afford, that the objects to be obtained are appreciated by those who should be best able to form an opinion respecting them.

My Lords concur as to the expediency of instituting an inquiry into the system and constitution of the Royal Dublin Society, with the view of ascertaining whether any changes might be made, having for this object to provide for the more efficient administration of the affairs of the Society by its Council, and to increase the control of the Superintending Public Department over the general management. A satisfactory settlement of such matters might, it appears to my Lords, be properly made a condition of the continuance of the public aid now given to the institution, and would seem to be called for by the statement of Captain Donnelly as to the want of power in the Council, as the administrative body of the Society.

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COPY OF TREASURY MINUTE, dated July 1862.

My Lords resume the consideration of the several questions relating to the Royal Dublin Society, which were brought under the notice of this Board by the letter of the Vice-President of the Committee of Council on Education of 26th February last. My Lords, by their Minute of May, and with reference to the Report made by Captain Donnelly, dated 11th December 1861, transmitted in Mr. Lowe's letter of 26th February, expressed their concurrence in the expediency of instituting an inquiry into the system and constitution of the Society, with the view of ascertaining whether any changes might be made, having for their object to provide for the more efficient administration of the affairs of the Society by its Council, and to increase the control of the Superintending Public Department over the general management, adding that a satisfactory settlement of such matters might be properly made a condition of the continuance of the public aid now given to the institution, and would even be called for by the statement of Captain Donnelly as to the want of power in the Council, as the administrative body of the Society. As the Royal Dublin Society is a chartered body, and as several of its functions, such as those connected with the Drawing School, Botanic Garden, &c., involve trusts created by Acts of Parliament, and as consequently it is probable that, in order to effect the object now in view, an alteration in the charter of the Society, and possibly also alterations in the Acts of Parliament referred to, may be found necessary, it appears to my Lords desirable that the inquiry should be intrusted to gentlemen whose position and knowledge of the constitution of the Society and of its working will facilitate a full and complete investigation, and lead to the satisfactory settlement adverted to in the Minute of 26th February. My Lords, therefore, propose that the following gentlemen be requested to undertake the inquiry:—The Right Honourable P. Blackburn, Lord Justice of Appeal; Sir R. Griffith, Bart., Chairman of the Board of Works; Sir C. Trevelyan, K.C.B.; Captain Donnelly, R.E. In considering the constitution of the Royal Dublin Society, its relations with the different departments, and the means of placing it in a more satisfactory position as regards its Museum and the other branches stated by Captain Donnelly to be incomplete, it would be within the province of the Commissioners to review the arrangements made in 1854 as regards the administration of the votes for the Royal Dublin Society and the Museum of Irish Industry, as set forth in the correspondence published with the Estimates of 1854-5. In the Estimates for the present year, a sum of 7,017*l.* is taken for the Royal Dublin Society, and a sum of 5,062*l.* 16*s.* for the Museum of Irish Industry (including provincial lectures), making together 12,079*l.* 16*s.* for objects of a cognate character, and under the direction of the same department of Government. It would be for the Commission to consider and report whether the public advantages, which form the object of these two institutions, might not be more effectually attained by a simplification of arrangement, and whether at the same time a reduction in the permanent annual charge might not be effected, while the better working of both institutions and the proper control of the Superintending Departments of Government might likewise be more effectually provided for. In connexion with these two institutions, the institution and working of the Committee of Lectures might be usefully inquired into by the Commission. There are two other institutions in Dublin connected intimately with the subject-matter of the inquiry: the National Gallery, now in progress of completion, and the Royal Hibernian Academy. The former of these institutions has been built on the premises belonging to the Royal Dublin Society, liable to a rent of 100*l.* a-year; and a question has been raised as to redemption of this rent by a grant, in order to purchase other premises contiguous to the Royal Dublin Society, as explained in Captain Donnelly's Report. Although erected entirely at the public expense, it is vested in trustees by Act of Parliament. The latter is supported to a considerable extent by an annual vote. My Lords have expressed their opinion that the proposed redemption of the rent payable by the National Gallery, in order to the acquisition of the premises proposed to be purchased, would not be a desirable measure; but they think this occasion would be a fitting one for inquiring whether these two institutions, with objects in close affinity with those of the Royal Dublin Society and the Museum of Irish

17 & 18 Vict. c. 99.
18 & 19 Vict. c. 99.

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Irish Industry, might not with advantage to them and efficiency and economy to the public, be brought, with the last-mentioned institutions, under one management and control.

Transmit a Copy of this Minute to the Vice-President of the Committee of Council on Education, requesting the concurrence of the Committee in the appointment of Captain Donnelly, and requesting also to be favoured with any observations the Committee of Council may have to make with reference to the proposed inquiry; and stating further, that it appears to my Lords that the appointment of a Secretary to the Commission will be unnecessary if Captain Donnelly would be so good as to undertake to keep the necessary record of the proceedings of the Committee.

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ROYAL DUBLIN SOCIETY, &c.

COPY of INSTRUCTIONS to the COMMISSION appointed to inquire into the ROYAL DUBLIN SOCIETY, the MUSEUM of IRISH INDUSTRY, and the System of SCIENTIFIC INSTRUCTION in *Ireland*.

(*Mr. Gregory.*)

Ordered, by The House of Commons, *to be Printed,* 13 *May* 1864.

Under 1 *oz.*

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